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Stan and the Sneaky Snacks; Stan and the Major Makeover; Stan and the Crafty Cats; Stan and the Golden Goals

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Editorial Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

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The four books about Stan the Dog, part of a series which aims to provide 'enticing stories for children who have just launched into reading', are told with Anderson's characteristic humour. His lively, cartoony illustrations complement the texts well; Stan's facial expressions are at times hilarious. The humans in the books are all given names that a dog might call them - thus the father is Bigbelly, the mother is Canopener, and the children Crumble and Handout. To continue with this theme, the chapters are referred to as Helpings. So the stage is set for an amusing read.

In **Stan and the Sneaky Snacks**, Stan is horrified at having to exercise along with Bigbelly. Bigbelly is none too amused at this either, and any child reading this story will easily identify with how Stan manages to both sabotage and then resolve matters. The mystifying business of how dogs manage to get so dirty and (sometimes) smell dreadfully is riotously outlined in the first part of **Stan and the Major Makeover**. And then, horror of horrors, Stan has to have a bath and get tidied up; having to go to Dog Training Sessions adds insult to injury. **Stan and the Crafty Cats** sees two initially unwelcome visitors find their way into Stan's home. And at first, these cats do seem to have no redeeming features at all; but then disaster threatens, and through this Stan comes to see that the cats have certainly got something going for them. In **Stan and the Golden Goals**, Stan is being excluded from playing football with Handout and his team. After really messing things up for everyone concerned, Stan redeems himself by finding Handout's asthma inhaler - and Handout is then able to score a goal for his team, with Stan getting his reward too.

The series will appeal to children, as there is ready humour at every turn. However, most of the main characters are male which may be less appealing to some girls. Page numbers are not always in evidence, which I found a little bit off-putting; and commas are used somewhat irregularly making at times for slightly elongated sentences. In spite of these minor gripes, I would recommend the series both for solo and shared reading.

Running Order:

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